

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday May 8th 2005

Theory Examination

It now appears likely that IRTS will be taking over responsibility for the Radio Theory Examination. The date on which the take-over will become effective is still subject to satisfactory conclusion of the negotiations currently underway between the IRTS and ComReg. It is, however likely that the take-over will occur before the end of the current year. Although the syllabus of the exam will not change, the submission made by IRTS was based on a Multiple Choice exam paper replacing the current essay-type paper.

A part of the agreement under negotiation with ComReg a special effort will now be made to accommodate those students who have been unable to sit a Theory Exam in the past year.

Discussions have continued between IRTS and ComReg and are now close to finality. A date for the theory examination will be agreed during the coming week and announced on next week's bulletins. All those on the ComReg list will be advised directly and anybody else thinking about sitting the exam should make immediate application to be included. The exam which will take place in Dublin, will be in the traditional essay type format. Contact information is as follows;

Derek O'Reilly, Licensing Division, ComReg, Abbey Court, Irish Life Centre, Lr. Abbey St., Dublin 1. Phone: 01 8049769 or Email: Derek dot oreilly at comreg dot ie. As this will probably be the last examination of the essay type held in EI it is very important that those who have prepared for an exam in that format get their names on the ComReg list without delay.

South Dublin Radio Club are providing theory revision classes from 8.00pm every Tuesday night in the Ballyroan Community Centre, Marian Road, Rathfarnham.

70cm Repeater in Limerick

The 70 cm repeater is back on air from the Patrickswell, Co.Limerick test QTH. Thanks to Ron EI2JP for supplying and programming the PMR rigs. Receive frequency is RB5, 433.125 MHz and transmit is +1.6 MHz offset. CTCSS / PL tone is 103.5 Hz.

It is not linked to any other repeater. Signal reports and queries to EI9FEB at Eircom

dot net. There will be no further 2 metre link experiments until various issues have been resolved.

Mills Weekend

The National Mills Weekend in the UK takes place over the weekend of the 7th and 8th of May 2005. More information can be had from www.g4cdd.net/mills.html

Canada Special Prefixes

At the request of Radio Amateurs of Canada, Industry Canada has authorized all Canadian radio amateurs to use special event prefixes for the month of May, 2005, to mark the opening of the new Canadian War Museum in Ottawa on the 8th of May, 2005 coincident with the 60th Anniversary of VE Day. The official opening of the new Canadian War Museum in Ottawa, the national capital of Canada, on May 8, 2005, coincides with the 60th anniversary of VE Day which, on May 8, 1945, officially ended the Second World War in Europe.

The year 2005 has been declared The Year of the Veteran by the Canadian. Canadian radio amateurs are authorized to use the following special event prefixes during the period 1 May to 31 May, 2005 inclusive:

CF for VA stations, CG for VE stations, CH for VO stations, CI0 for VY0 stations, CI1 for VY1 stations, CI2 for VY2 stations.

CW Field Day

The CW Field Day will as usual be held over the first full weekend in June and intending participants are asked to contact the contest manager as soon as possible. If there is sufficient interest, the event can be held at a central location. The following have already confirmed their participation: The Shannon Basin Group, The East Cork Group and Joe Ryan EI7GY.

Mini Marathon

On Monday the 6th of June, EI2BY will be providing emergency radio coverage of the women's mini-marathon. If you would like to take part in this special event licensed by ComReg as EI2WMM please contact George Adjaye, EI2CPB by fax on

01 4908546 or phone 086 2586103. You can also e-mail George at adjayeg@dcu.ie. Please provide your name, phone number and callsign. Also note that you will require a 2-metre rig of your own for the event.

CNN International Features Ham Radio

A reminder that the world-wide cable TV news channel CNN is featuring a segment on amateur radio operators' response to the December 26th tsunami and the March Indonesian earthquake. The segment focuses on the HF and Echolink operations of Bharathi Prasad, VU2RBI, who served as the main contact point for amateur radio traffic in and out of India in the wake of the devastating tsunami. In Europe, the feature is broadcast on the 'Global Challenges' programme on the CNN International channel at 0230 and 2000 UTC on the 1st and 8th of May.

The CNN feature on amateur radio is available as a 76 Mb download at ftp://espectro.sra.ufsc.br/pub/CNN_Tsunami_HamRadio.mpg

Rockall Island

GM island activator Seamus "Jim" Cameron MM0CWJ, a Hebridean and himself a sailor with a deep knowledge and experience of remote islands in that area, will join adventurer David Wood, MM0ALM as the two-man amateur radio side of an expedition to Rockall from around June 14th until about June 21st. This will be a high risk operation in more ways than one. Take a look at the last picture of the rock on a fairly average summer's day on the web-site! This will be a very costly expedition. If successful, proceeds will go to their chosen charitable organisations and unique Rockall stamps will be issued. Very few have landed on the rock, although many have attempted to do so. Ex-SAS man and Atlantic oarsman Tom Maclean did so in reportedly excellent WX conditions. Greenpeace also occupied the rock a few years ago, again in near perfect WX. But if Seamus and David make it, this will be an incredible "first" not just for IOTA, but for amateur radio in general. Note that Rockall is beyond the range of "search and rescue" helicopters.

The web-site below has just been set up by Seamus MM0CWJ and should be considered as the official web-site for the amateur radio aspect of the expedition. In the meantime, please pass the word around as widely as you wish. Please do not contact the expedition members for requests for skeds etc.

The Rockall Island web-site can be found at www.rockallisland.co.uk

Space and Solar News

Every 11 years solar activity surges. Sunspots pepper the sun and periodically explode ejecting massive clouds of gas known as "CMEs". At the moment, the sun is approaching the opposite extreme of its activity cycle, solar minimum, due in 2006.

X-flares are the most powerful kind of solar explosions; they're associated with bright auroras and intense radiation storms. It has been noted that there was at least one X-flare during each of the last three solar minima.

Between January 15th and 20th last, a sunspot unleashed two X-class solar flares, sparked auroras much further south than is usual. At present, despite the approach of sunspot minima, the Sun remains quite active. This probably accounts for some of the unusual HF conditions that we've been experiencing lately.

Earth is currently in a stream of space dust trailing Halley's Comet, producing a mild meteor shower known as the Aquarids. The shower is most intense over the southern hemisphere. Northern hemisphere rates are much lower but not zero.

Items for inclusion in next weeks Radio News should be forwarded to Mark EI7IS at QTHR or by phone to 087-6302026. News should be submitted via e-mail to news@irts.ie for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. Please note that items for the radio news should reach the editor no later than midday on Fridays.

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